

Message Text

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USDOC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 5301

USDOC FOR BEWT FOR DOWNEY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BEXP, EEW, GE

SUBJECT: SPRING 1976 LEIPZIG FAIR

REF: A) STATE 40379 B) BERLIN 5267

1. EMBOFF MET WITH KIRSTEN AND SCHMIED AT FOREING TRADE MINISTRY MORNING OF FEBRUARY 23 AND MADE PRESENTATION ENVISIONED IN REFTELS, EMPHASIZING THAT HALL 16 EXHIBIT IS A TRADE PROMOTION EFFORT, AND CONCLUDING THAT U.S. HAS NO INTENTION OF MAKING CHANGES IN EXHIBIT DESIGN. EMBOFF SAID HE WOULD PERSONNALLY REGRET IT IF THIS QUESTION WERE TO BECOME AN EVENT IN BILATERAL RELATIONS.

2. KIRSTEN WAS IN A CONCILIATORY MOOD, POSSIBLY HAVING ALREADY RECIEVED REPORTS OF DEMARCHE TO GDR REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON. HE REPEATED WHAT HE CALLED GDR CONCERN TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE TRADE CHARACTER OF THE LEIPZIG FAIR. HE REMARKED THAT THE U.S. DESIRE TO MAKE REFERENCE AT SELECTED POINTS IN EXHIBIT DESIGN TO BICENTENNIAL THEME IS UNDERSTANDABLE AND HE CONTINUED IN A VEIN THAT SUGGESTED HE WAS LOOKING FOR ARGUMENTS FROM THE U.S. SIDE TO STRENGTHEN THE IMPRESSION OF TRADE

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PROMOTION AS THE PURPOSE OF THE EXHIBIT. SCHMIED TOOK A

SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT LINE, REFERRING TO GDR DOUBTS ABOUT WHETHER "SECTIONS ONE THROUGH THREE" OF THE EXHIBIT (EXHIBIT PANELS ON FIRST HUNDRED YEARS OF BICENTENNIAL HISTORY) COULD BE CONSTRUED AS COMPATIBLE WITH CONCRETE EXPORT PROMOTION. RESPONDING TO A CHARACTERIZATION BY EMBOFF OF THE BICENTENNIAL THEME AS "BACKGROUND" FOR TRADE PROMOTION EFFORT, SCHMIED SIAD IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE BACKGROUND NOT BECOME THE FOREGROUND. KIRSTEN CONCLUDED THAT AS A NEXT STEP EMBOFF SHOULD ACCEPT THE LEIPZIG FAIR AUTHORITY'S INVITATION(SENT TO THE EMBASSY BY TELEGRAM FEBRUARY 20) TO DISCUSS THE EXHIBIT WITH SENIOR FAIR OFFICIALS IN LEIPZIG. EMBOFF SAID THAT THROUGH THE WHOLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EXHIBIT, THE U.S. SIDE HAD BEEN OPEN IN DISCUSSING ITS PLANS WITH GDR OFFICIALS, AND WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO DO SO IN THIS INSTANCE AS WELL.

3. COMMENT: THE IMPRESSION THE EMBASSY TOOK FROM THIS MEETING IS THAT THE GDR, HAVING MISCALCULATED U.S. REACTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES, IS NOW SEEKING A MEANS TO BACK AWAY FROM THE DEMAND THAT WE MAKE CHANGES IN OUR EXHIBIT WHILE SAVING SOME REMNANT OF FACE. WE PROPOSE TO BE HELPFUL IN THIS EFFORT. EMBASSY ECON/COMM AND PRESS AND CULTURE OFFICER HAVE AGREED TO MEET IN LEIPZIG FEBRUARY 24 WITH FAIR AUTHORITY, WHERE EMBOFFS WILL PROVIDE WHATEVER INFORMATION IS DESIRED ABOUT HALL 16 EXHIBIT, STRESSING ITS TRADE PROMOTIONAL QUALITIES. EMBASSY WILL, OF COURSE, CONTINUE TO REJECT ANY SUGGESTION THAT CHANGES IN EXHIBIT ARE INTENDED, OR WARRANTED, OR WILL BE MADE.GROVE

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